

REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS

Hebrews 6:1 says, *“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and faith toward God.”* The very first foundation is repentance from dead works. The first two foundations (faith and repentance from dead works toward God) are absolutely the most important. But it is impossible to understand these two apart from understanding grace and peace. With repentance from dead works we are going to focus on the power of grace in our lives.

The word “repent” means to have a change of mind. It does not mean to cry at an altar. It does not even necessarily mean that you change your direction. You will ultimately change your direction. If you change your mind, you will change direction. When the Bible talks about repentance, it is usually talking about us changing our minds about what we believe. What you believe produces the actions in your life. You can change the actions and really not have repented at all. The Greek word for “repent” in the New Testament means to change your mind. When I get saved I have to renew my mind. I have to change my mind about what I think about God, myself, life, marriage and finances. I have to change my mind to believe what God’s Word tells me.

When I was first born again I was a rock-and-roll musician and a drug dealer. I did not feel comfortable continuing to do either one of these things. As a Christian, I did not feel this would be the thing to do. I was immediately without a job and had nothing to do but read. I had a New Testament that I had probably stolen from somewhere. I am glad it was only a New Testament. If it had been both Old and New Testaments, I would have started at the beginning of the book. I had already tried that years before only to find confusion. Right away I found that it said you have to believe. As I read, every time I found something that was different about life than the way I viewed it, I would get out of my rocking chair, get on my knees and say, “God, I am willing to believe this.” That was repentance. I was changing my mind about what I believed.

Reading the book of Proverbs I found that it is to a man's honor to overlook an insult. From my past, when you were insulted, you got honor by beating the daylights out of the guy. I had to repent about that. I had to change my mind. The way to have honor in that situation is to overlook the insult. I would sometimes come across things that I did not understand. I would get on my knees and say, "God, I really do not know what this means, but you say to believe it and I will believe it. You will have to help me understand what it means." That is repentance! That is how we renew our minds. We change our mind, our opinion, our point of view.

When we accept Jesus, we are to change our minds about dead works. When we think of dead works, we tend to think of *evil* works. Paul (we assume it is Paul's writing) is not talking about evil works, but about dead works. Dead works will kill you faster than evil works will. Evil works will kill you, but Paul is not saying in this passage to repent about chasing women. Paul did not chase women. He is not saying¹ in this passage to repent from being a drunk. He was not a drunk. He is not saying to repent from cheating and stealing. He did not cheat and steal. What Paul had to change his mind about was what he believed would make him righteous. When we accept Jesus, we have to change our minds about dead works.

There is no functional difference between dead works and good works. People are easily confused about good works and dead works. Ephesians 2:10 says, "*For we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do.*" We are supposed to do good works, but we are supposed to change our minds about dead works. Dead works and good works can be the same action with different motives.

Praying can be dead works. For a lot of people, getting saved is getting a fire insurance policy and praying and reading the Bible is paying the premiums. If you are praying because you think you have to in order to earn something from God, that is dead works. If you are praying because you want to have a relationship with God, that is good works.

If you are reading your Bible because you think it qualifies you for God's blessings, that is dead works. If you are reading your Bible because you want to renew your mind, learn about God, and grow as a person, that is good works.

¹ There are other scriptures that are very clear about abstaining the sinful lifestyle.

Witnessing . . . Jehovah's Witness' are out knocking on doors early on Saturday morning. If you ask them why they are doing this, they will tell you that it is what they must do to go to heaven. DEAD WORKS! Many people think they have to witness for God to love them or to go to heaven. That is dead works. Witnessing because you have a passion for people and because you care about what happens to them is good works. It is not just what you do. It is the **motive** behind what you do.

Attending church . . . Some who attend church hate it, but others because they want to come together. They want to learn about God. They want to walk with God. They want to be a part of a family. They want to make their life count -- GOOD WORKS. Anything can be dead works or good works. What determines the difference is your motive for doing it.

I do several things that I do not necessarily like to do, but I recognize my need to do it. Not my need to make God love me, but because I realize that by doing certain things I am going to grow and develop. I am going to develop as a person, and that is good works.

In order to understand and repent from dead works it is essential that we understand the grace of God. The grace of God was the power that worked in Jesus. It was the power that worked in the Apostles and it is the power that works in every believer to live above sin and to do good works.

John 1:14 says, *"And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus."* Jesus brought us grace and truth. Moses brought us truth, but he did not bring us grace and truth. The law was truth, but it required the ability of man to uphold it.

Romans 8:3 says, *"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."* According to this verse, the weakness of the law is the flesh. When the Bible speaks of flesh it speaks of man's attempt to be righteous by his own ability/works.

We think that being in the spirit is like being way out there, floating around in the heavenlies, having a mist in our eyes, hearing angels humming in the background. In our minds, that is being in the spirit. Or, depending on what church you attend, it may

be shaking and quivering. We think that being in the flesh is when we sin and do bad things, but neither is true. Being in the flesh is when you attempt to be righteous by your own ability, by your performance. Being in the spirit is when you accept that righteousness is a work of the spirit of grace, the spirit of God that is in you. It is a free gift that came in you with Jesus. You are in the spirit if you believe that Jesus is your Lord and that He has made you righteous. You are in the flesh if you believe that you are saved, but must perform to earn righteousness. Being in the flesh *leads* to sin. The Bible talks about the fruit of the spirit and the works of the flesh. The fruit of the spirit is something that grows in your life because you believe that you are righteous. The works of the flesh are those things that you end up doing because you do not believe you are righteous, because you are limiting yourself to your ability.

Doing the best you could did not help you before you got saved. I did the best I could do, and I still ended up a drunk and a substance abuser. That was the best I could do. I do not want to be living in the best I can do. I know the best I can do, and it is not very much. You might not have been as bad off as I was, but if you had stayed there long enough, you would have been. When you get saved you do not have any more ability to live above sin than you did before you got saved, apart from the grace of God. That is why Christians still have problems with sin. They are trying to do the best they can instead of trusting God to work in their lives. Attempting to be made righteous by one's ability is dead works.

Moses brought us the law. He brought us truth. But it was dependant upon our ability to live it. Jesus brought us grace and truth. Everything that Jesus did was a work of God's grace in His life. The ability to live above sin, the ability to work miracles, the love and patience to minister to people, even the ability to face the death and suffering of the cross was a work of grace. It was a work of God's ability. Remember that Jesus became a man, "like as we are," in all ways. As a man, He did not have the ability to do these things apart from God working in Him.

The traditional definition of grace is "unmerited favor." That does not tell you anything. "Unmerited favor," just means that God accepts you apart from your performance. Grace is not God's ability to overlook your sin. Grace is God's ability to get you out of sin. A biblical definition of grace is: (This is a biblical definition of the word "grace." It is not the complete definition, but is a condensed version.) a divine

influence, which works from the heart and makes one able.² In other words, **grace** makes you able. It is the ability of God that works in your heart. Moses gave us truth, but it was up to our ability to live that truth. Jesus gave us truth AND the ability to live that truth.

Everything we have in God is a work of grace. Ephesians 2:8-10 says, *“For by grace are you saved through faith, not of yourself, it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”* We are saved by grace through faith. We tend to leave the grace part out of it. We are saved by God’s ability.

What does that really mean? The word “saved” comes from the Greek word “sozo.” Sozo means to save, heal, deliver, preserve, do well, make whole, keep safe and sound, and to rescue from danger. Jesus looked at the woman who had the issue of blood and said, “Thy faith has made thee sozo, healed.” Sozo can mean healed, it can mean born again. The Bible says to lay hands on the sick and they will be sozo. They will be healed. They will recover. You begin realizing that it is not just our born-again experience that is a work of grace through faith, but everything that ever happens. If you get healed, it is grace through faith. If you have prosperity working in your life, it is by grace through faith. If you learn to walk in love, it will not be information that makes it happen, but grace through faith. Everything that God does is a matter of grace that makes us able. Every work of God is a work of grace, the divine influence of the heart that makes one able. Grace makes us able to walk in healing.

Grace makes us able to be all that God said we could be. It is His power, not ours. This tells me that no one has to fail. As a matter of fact, the Bible says in the book of Romans that God made this to be of grace so the promise would be sure to all. As long as it was law, the promise was only sure to people who had the ability. People like me would have gone to hell under the law. I was not one of those people who had the ability. The only way the promise could be sure for everyone was because God said, “We are not going to make this thing work from your ability; we are going to make it work on my ability. We are going to make sure that you can make it.”

Romans 5:21 says, *“That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”* When sin

² Thayer, Lexicon

reigns it brings death. Do not forget that. Sin will kill you. God will still love you while you are dying, but sin is going to kill you. When righteousness reigns, it brings grace.

How does righteousness empower my life? Simple. Do I believe I am righteous in Jesus. If Jesus is my righteousness, then righteousness will allow grace to reign. When grace reigns, it brings life. This word for “life” is not just being alive. It is the Greek word, “zoe.” “Zoe” is the quality of life possessed by God. It is the quality of life that you have. Grace will bring you a new quality of life. It will make you able to live a new quality of life. Righteousness is given to me as a free gift when I receive Jesus. Jesus is my righteousness. Romans 10: 9-10 says, *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shall believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, thou shall be saved. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”* We do not work our way to righteousness. We believe our way to righteousness. We believe on the finished work of Jesus.

Galatians 5:4 talks about falling from grace. It says, *“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; you are fallen from grace.”* The Baptist and the Methodist fight over what this means. They assume that grace only applies to the born again experience. Falling from grace has nothing to do with whether or not you are born again. Falling from grace has to do with whether or not you are living in this realm of God’s ability.

Falling from grace is when a person tries to be righteous by works of the law. Any law -- it could be Baptist law, Methodist law, Catholic law, and the law you make in your mind. It could be the Law of Moses. When you try to be righteous with God by a list of rules, you have rejected the finished work of Jesus, and Christ is no longer of any affect in your life. You have fallen from that realm of God’s ability. I want to live and walk in the realm where God’s ability works in me. I do not want to have Jesus in my life, trying to do the best I can and say, “No, I do not want your help. I am just going to do the best I can.” That is not what He wants. It is not a matter of trying to please God. God made us pleasing through Jesus. It is a matter of whether or not I can have the quality of life that God has here and now That is why I want to live in grace and stay out of sin. Falling from Grace means that we have left that realm of God’s ability. He cannot work in our lives when we are depending on our own ability.

Galatians 2:21 says, *“I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness comes by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”* The word “frustrate” means to set aside, neutralize, disannul, nullify, make void, or to reject. When we try to be righteous and acceptable to God by our works we neutralize God’s ability. His ability no longer works in our lives, therefore, we are left to our own ability. When I believe that I am righteous because of Jesus, grace (the ability of God) works in my life and I can live righteous. Therefore, if you look back at your failures and say, “I am just not much of a Christian.” you are denying that you are righteous and grace cannot work in your life. You have to look back and say, “Yes, I have problems. This is sin and I call it sin. God, I am confessing this sin to you, but I still believe that I am righteous. I still believe the righteousness of God is in me.” If you believe that, you will come out of that sin. This was what the Apostle meant when he said, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Everything that the Bible says I can do I can do, because I trust Him to live in me and empower me. Nothing I do will make me more righteous. I am righteous through Jesus because I believe that I am righteous. I have the grace (ability of God) to live righteous, fulfill my dreams, and be all that God would have me to be.³

I will mention this about grace. There is really no such thing as gifts of the Holy Spirit. We have a concept that the gifts of the Holy Spirit (healing, tongues, and prophecy) are something that God hands you as a little toy to play with. It is a gift because it is free, but actually the word for the gifts of the Holy Spirit comes from the Greek word “charis” - “grace of the Holy Spirit.” I cannot heal, but God in me is able. That is why we lay hands on the sick. Not because we can do it, but because God in us can do it. All of these are abilities of the Holy Spirit that we allow to flow through us. We do not have to work them up; we just let His ability flow out of us.

³ I encourage you to read my book, [Grace: The Power to Change](#). It will get you on track with grace. We are only hitting the high spots.

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH
Class # 2
REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS

Psalm 11:3, *"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"*

Hebrews 6:1, *"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God . . ."*

The first two foundations of the faith are repentance from dead works and faith toward God. Of all we build upon, this is the most important. However, this is impossible apart from understanding the grace and peace of God.

Repent means to _____.

When we accept Jesus, we are to change our minds about _____.

What is the difference between dead works and good works? _____.

Ephesians 2:10, *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."*

Dead works and good works can be the same actions with different motives.

_____ can be dead works or good works.

_____ can be dead works or good works.

_____ can be dead works or good works.

_____ can be dead works or good works.

In order to understand and repent from dead works it is essential that we understand the grace of God. The grace of God was the power that worked in Jesus. It was the power that worked in the apostles. It is the power that works in every believer to live above sin and do good works.

John 1:14 & 17, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. 17) For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

Jesus brought _____ and _____.

The law was _____, but it required the _____ of man to uphold it.

Romans 8:3 "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

According to this verse, the weakness of the law was the _____.

When the Bible speaks of flesh, it speaks of man's attempt to be righteous by his own _____/_____.

Attempting to be made righteous by one's _____ is dead works.

Jesus brought grace and truth.

Everything that Jesus did was a work of God's grace in His life; the ability to live above sin; the ability to work miracles; the love and the patience to minister to the people; even the ability to face the death and suffering of the cross was a work of grace.

Traditional definition of grace, _____.

A biblical definition of grace: "A divine influence which works from the heart and makes one able."

Jesus gave us truth and the _____ to live that truth.

Ephesians 2:8-10, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

We are saved by _____ through _____.

The word "saved" comes from a Greek word, "sozo." Sozo means to save, heal, deliver, preserve, do well, make whole, keep safe and sound, and to rescue from danger and destruction.

Every work of God is a work of grace, a divine influence in the heart that makes one able.

Grace makes us able to walk in healing, _____ makes us _____ to be all that God said we could be. It is His power, not ours.

How does grace work in my life?

Romans 5:21, "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

When sin reigns it always brings _____.

When righteousness reigns it brings _____.

When grace reigns it brings _____.

Righteousness was given to me as a free gift when I received Jesus.

_____ is my righteousness.

Romans 10:9-10, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10)

For with the heart man _____ unto _____; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

We do not work our way to righteousness we _____ on the finished work of Jesus. He makes us righteous as a free gift.

Galatians 5:4 "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

When a person tries to be righteous by _____ of any law, he has rejected the finished work of Jesus. Christ is no longer of any effect in his life. Why? He has fallen from _____ / _____.

Falling from grace means that we have fallen from the realm of God's _____. His ability cannot work in our lives when we are trying to live in our ability.

Galatians 2:21 "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

The word "frustrate" means to set aside, _____, disannul, nullify, make void or reject.

When we try to be righteous and acceptable to God by our works we neutralize God's ability. His power no longer works in our lives we are left to our own ability.

When I believe I am _____ because of Jesus, the _____ / _____ of God works in my life to live _____.

This is what the apostle meant when he said, "I can do _____ things through Christ who _____ me."

Everything that the Bible says I can do, I can do because I trust Him to live in me and empower me. None of the things I do will make me more righteous. I am righteous through Jesus. Because I believe I am righteous, I have the _____ / _____ of God to live righteous, fulfill my dreams and be all that God would have me to be.

"Grace The Power to Change", by Dr. James B. Richards, would be excellent reading to come to a full understanding of God's grace.

FAITH TOWARD GOD

Faith toward God is the second foundation of faith. Faith is simply trusting God. It is impossible to trust someone of whom you are afraid. You cannot trust someone and be afraid of them at the same time. The word for fear in the Old Testament is not a word that means terror. It means to have an awe for God that inspires love, worship and adoration. It is not talking about being afraid of what He will do to you. We are only able to trust God when we believe He loves us and will not hurt us. Tradition has created an unbiblical view of God. Religious people have tried to use fear as motivation to obey God, but we should be motivated by love. When we believe God loves us, we will obey Him. When we love Him, it will be easy to obey Him. Jesus said in John 14:15, *“If you love me, you will obey me.”* Pretty simple, isn't it? Many people take that and say, “Okay, you have to obey Him to prove that you love Him.” That is getting the cart before the horse. He is saying, “If you love Me, you will obey Me.”

When I see a person who is not obeying God that tells me that they are not really in love with God. It does not tell me how bad a person he is. This is a person who is not experiencing the love of God. The scripture teaches that you cannot love God until you are first convinced that He loves you. I John 4 says that we love Him because He first loved us. Instead of trying so hard to love God, we need to learn about God's love for us. When we believe and experience His love, the natural response will be to fall in love with Him. It is easy to love someone who loves you.

God's love is revealed to us in many ways, however, it is clearly seen at the cross. As we begin to grasp the truth of what He did at the cross we begin to fall deeply in love with Him. We get the greatest understanding of God's love when we realize the penalty Jesus paid for sin and how He made peace between God and man.

Luke 2:8-10 tells the story of what happened with the shepherds when they were out in the field and the angels appeared. It says, *“And there were, in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them and the glory of the Lord shown round about them and they were sore afraid. And the angels said unto them, ‘Fear not. For behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born,*

this day, in the city of David, a Savior which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign to you. Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly hosts praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.’” We see this, “peace, good will toward men”, at Christmas. It has become a Christmas greeting. It says in Luke 2:10, “*And the angel said unto them, ‘Fear not, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.’”* Luke 2:14 says, “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*”

The good will was not between *men*. The peace was not *between men*. The good will and the peace were both from God. What was significant about this? Why did these angels get so excited and break out praising God saying, “Hallelujah, Glory to God, and on earth there is going to be peace and good will toward men?” It is because God, for the first time since Adam brought sin into the world, was making peace between Himself and man. This is something that had not existed on the face of the earth for four thousand years.

Sin had to be paid for under the Old Covenant. Righteousness was not yet satisfied and God was angry. Psalms 7:11 says, “*God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.*” People quote that verse and frighten the world. That was under a different covenant. That was before righteousness was satisfied and wrath was appeased. God made a New Covenant in the blood of Jesus that fulfilled righteousness and satisfied judgment..

We should forget the Old Covenant! Let’s say that you financed your house and interest was at 10%, then the rates dropped down to 6%. You draw up a new covenant, a new contract. On this new contract your interest rate is 6%. Your payment has dropped from \$800 to \$600 per month. Part of that contract will say that all previous agreements, whether written or otherwise, are null and void. That is a part of every contract. You know your house payment is going to be \$600 per month instead of \$800. If the payment notice comes and tells you to pay \$800, are you going to pay it? No! You will pay \$600, because you have a new contract. Because of unbelief we go back to the requirement of the old contract and reject the requirement of the new contract when trying to relate to God. We are not established in the New Covenant.

Galatians 3:13 says, *“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”* 2 Corinthians 1:20 says, *“For no matter how many promises God has made, they are Yes in Christ. So through him the Amen is spoken by us to the glory of God.”* ALL of the promises are yours because you are in Jesus. NONE of the curses are yours, because you are in Jesus.

We still try to get the promises by qualifying under the old contract. The old contract says you have to do everything right. You are fooling yourself if you think you can qualify for the promises of God by doing everything right. You are a self-righteous, deceived person if you think you can qualify for the promises apart from Jesus. You cannot qualify. Jesus has been the only person that could qualify. I cannot qualify and you cannot qualify under those old requirements. The law not only required you to do everything right, it also required you to do it right from your heart. Nobody measured up under the law. We qualify because we are in Jesus. No one, other than Jesus, ever qualified under the law.

Romans 5:8-11 says, *“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.”* I am justified by the blood of Jesus and saved from wrath through Him. I was an enemy of God, but now I am near to God by the death of His Son. The word “justified” means made righteous. Some people break it down and say that “justified” means “just as if I’d never sinned.” That is not a good definition. “Just as if I’d never sinned” is like saying that I am still scum, but God is going to pretend like I am not. It is not just as if I had never sinned. God has made a new creation. We are righteous through the blood of Jesus.

The word “reconciled” is a very interesting word. It means, “exchanged.” I have been made righteous to God, but an exchange has also taken place. Isaiah 53:4-10 talks about this exchange. *“Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was*

pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. He was assigned a grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand." This passage describes what I call the "Great Exchange."

2 Corinthians 5:21 says, *"For God made him who knew no sin to be sin . . ."* He became **our** sin, the sins of the world. Remember that righteousness of the law required that sin be paid for in the body of the sinner. The only way we could make it to heaven was for all righteousness to be fulfilled. Jesus had to **become** our sin. When He became our sin, He was then wounded, or punished, for our transgression. When it says that He carried our grief and sorrows, those words in the Hebrew mean sickness and disease. He carried the sickness and disease that the law says we deserve. An exchange took place. Jesus became all that we were as far as our sinful nature, and He took all of the punishment that we deserve. That is only half of this truth. There is another side. Then we receive, as a free gift, all that He was and all that He deserved. That is a great deal!

1 John 2:1-2 says, *"My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not."* God does not want man to sin, but when he does sin, God helps him. *"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father . . ."* An advocate is someone who is for you. God is still for us when we sin. We still have an advocate even when we sin. Verse 3 says, *"And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."* The word "propitiation" means to satisfy. It satisfies wrath and righteousness. Jesus satisfied all of the requirements of the law for righteousness, but He also satisfied all of the requirements of the law for punishment. He is our

propitiation. He satisfied God on our behalf.

Think about this and write it down in your own words. God's wrath against my sin is satisfied. God's need for me to be righteous is satisfied in Jesus. In your life, did you grow up with a picture of God as being satisfied? You probably saw God as being angry, but God has not been angry since Jesus was raised from the dead.

1 John 4:10, "*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*" One of the reasons people do not love God is because they do not realize what Jesus did for them. We have this picture of Jesus hanging on the cross, a little blood trickling down and a glowing halo hanging behind His head.

When you have a favorite child, the parents do not want to punish that child. For example: A mother and a father leave two children at home and say, "I am going to the store. I want you to clean up the house and help me. I want everything to be clean and in good shape when I come back." The mother and father leave and the favored child does not do anything. He knows that he does not have to. The other child knows that if he does not clean the house, he will be in trouble. The child that is not favored does all of the work. Just before the parents come home the favored child gets mad and breaks a flowerpot. It hits the floor, dirt flies everywhere, and now the clean house is a mess. The parent walks in and is full of rage. The parent knows which child did it, but he loves him so much. He has so much compassion for him that he just does not have the heart to punish him. He turns to the other child and punishes him instead.

That seems totally unfair, but that is how much God loves you. He loves you so much that even though we were the ones that broke the flowerpot, even though we were the ones who made the mess, He said, "I love you too much for you to have to pay this price. We are God's favorite child. God took Jesus and said, "You will pay the price for everyone." When that becomes a reality to you, you will fall in love with God. He became our sin and took everything that our sin deserves. The Bible says that all of His joints went out of place. Every sickness known to man came on Jesus while on the cross. He did not just die. He went to hell. That is what righteousness requires. We never have to face those things and we never have to be afraid of God. God proved His love at the cross by satisfying His wrath. We never have to fear the wrath of God. Jesus experienced rejection so that we could be assured acceptance.

Ephesians 1:6 says, *“For the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved.”* I am accepted. I may be the child that makes the mess, but I am still accepted. That does not mean I want to excuse myself and keep making messes, but when I make the mess I know God will not turn against me in judgment and wrath.

Isaiah 54:7 *“For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back. In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you, says the Lord your Redeemer. To me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again. Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you. O afflicted city, lashed by storms and not comforted, I will build you with stones of turquoise, your foundations with sapphires. I will make your battlements of rubies, and your gates of sparkling jewels, and all your walls of precious stones. All your sons will be taught by the Lord, and great will be your children’s peace. In righteousness you will be established: Tyranny will be far from you; you will have nothing to fear. Terror will be far removed; it will not come near you. If anyone does attack you, it will not be my doing; whoever attacks you will surrender to you. See, it is I who created the blacksmith who fans the coals into flame and forges a weapon fit for its work. And it is I who have created the destroyer to work havoc; no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and this is their vindication from me.”* In verse 9, when it says *“this is as the waters of Noah unto me,”* God promises to never be angry again.

Do you believe the promise that God made to Noah that He would never again flood the world with water? He says this is just like that promise. *“Just like I swore to Noah that I would never destroy the world by water, I will never be angry with you.”* We believe that God is never going to flood the world again. He sealed that promise with a rainbow. He told **us** He would never be angry with us, and never rebuke us. He sealed that promise with the blood of Jesus. We believe the promise sealed with a rainbow, but we do not believe the promise sealed with the blood of Jesus.

This is a product of what we have been taught, all of our lives. We have always been taught that God was angry. People have tried to use fear as a way to manipulate us into serving God. That does not work. It says in the last part of Isaiah 54:9, “*So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again . . . my unflinching love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed.*” The New Covenant that God establishes is called the covenant of peace. It is called the covenant of peace because this is where God made peace with man.

Isaiah 54:17 says we should refute every tongue that accuses us. An accusation brings judgement. The King James Version says that you should condemn every tongue that pronounces judgment on you. An accusation brings judgement and God freed us from judgement through Jesus. If He were to accuse and judge us, He would break His own covenant. People say that God is going to judge America. Can you believe that in light of these scriptures? I have heard people say that if God does not judge America, He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. I say, “If God judges America, He will have to apologize to Jesus, because He established a covenant of peace.” If America falls, it will be because we have given ourselves to sin and wickedness. God does not have to judge us for us to fall. Sin will make us fall.

Proverbs 19:27, “*Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.*” Any message that undermines the love of God will cause the believer to err. When people move away from Huntsville they ask, “What will we do for a church?” I tell them that choosing a church that speaks in tongues or that worships the way we do is not the most important factor. Find a church that places a **strong** emphasis on the love of God. You do not want to leave church feeling beaten up. If you are in a church that really promotes the love of God, you will make it. You will not leave beaten up. You will leave built up!

Romans 10:13-17, “*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? (We have too many preachers that have not been sent.) As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the **gospel of peace** and bring glad tidings of good things!*” Get a concordance and look up peace. Start looking at it as more than just a tranquil state of

mind and start realizing that it is a “tranquil state of mind that comes because there is peace between you and God.” You may say, “Man, I did not know there was a gospel of peace.” There is! It is the good news about the peace that God made with man through Jesus.

It continues, they have not all obeyed or believed the gospel. That word “obey” in the Greek means believe. Believe and obey are the same word. Not everyone believed this good report. Isaiah said, *“Lord, who has believed the report. So then, faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.”* One must believe the gospel of peace if the Word is to produce faith when they read it. It did say that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. It says that if you call upon the name of the Lord you will be saved, and you will call because you believe. You will believe because somebody preached it to you. Somebody is going to preach to you because they have been sent. They will preach the gospel of peace to you, and *then* faith will come by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Most of what you hear is not going to build faith. Faith is trusting God. Hearing that God is going to kill you will not make you trust him. That will destroy faith, not build it.

Ephesians 6:11,15, *“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil . . . And have your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”* The word “preparation” means “a firm foundation that comes from a readiness of mind.” The foundation that causes a believer to stand firm in every situation is the gospel of peace. This is talking about emotionally maintaining your footing. If you do not maintain your footing, when someone hits you, you fall over. Back in those days when a soldier went to battle, the main thing was to keep your footing. In hand-to-hand combat, you must keep your footing. It does not matter how strong you are, you have to keep your footing. When I train people in health and they are going through an exercise program, I always tell them to build their legs. The most important muscles to build in the body are your legs. It will keep you from having back pain. It will help you to walk and work all day. Most of us do not lose upper body strength; we lose lower body strength. We need lower body strength in battle. When someone hits you, you will always maintain your balance.

No matter what hits you emotionally, you want to maintain your balance. If the first thought you have when sickness comes is, “What did I do wrong? Why is God

letting this happen to me?” you are going to lose your balance. When financial disaster hits, if you say, “O my God, what did I do to deserve this?” you have lost your balance. Your footing is not good; you are gone.

Before I get the answer to my problem, I need to first get myself stabilized. No matter what happens in my life I know there is peace between God and me. These bad things are not from God. God is not doing this. Out of that peace in my heart, I have the emotional stability to walk this out and keep trusting in God. The message of the cross is the message of how God made peace between Himself and man.

In the Living Bible, I John 4:18-19 says, *“We need have no fear of someone who loves us perfectly. His perfect love for us eliminates all dread of what he might do to us. If we are afraid, it is for fear of what he might do to us and shows that we are not fully convinced that he really loves us. So you see, our love for him comes as a result of his loving us first.”* Believing that God loves me with a perfect love sets me free from the fear of what He will do to me. Any time something goes wrong in your life and you think that it might be God, this tells you that you do not really believe He loves you with a perfect love.

We do not understand perfect love because all we have ever experienced is conditional love. We have people all around us that will love us as long as we do everything right. But God is going to love us whether we do things right or not. The thing that will keep your heart stable is to believe that “stuff happens.” It is not important that I understand where it comes from. All I need to know is that bad things are not from God.

When I first got saved I was taught about faith. Faith was taught to me as if it were my trying to get God to do something that He did not want to do. I was taught that God was doing this to me and I had to believe hard enough to get Him to do something else. I cannot change the mind of God. I do not have that much faith. Early on, I told God that I did not have much faith, and if this is the way it is, I am done. Faith is trusting that God is for you no matter how the circumstances look. That will keep your emotions stable.

Having faith does not mean I will always get the specific outcome that I desire. Having faith means believing God will not hurt me or abandon me. It means that no matter what the outcome, I will emerge victorious because God is with me.

*In order to better understand the gospel of peace, I recommend reading my book, "The Gospel of Peace."

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH

Class # 3

FAITH TOWARD GOD

Psalm 11:3, *"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"*

Faith is simply trusting God. It is impossible to _____ someone if you are _____ of that person. We are only able to trust God when we believe He loves and will not _____ us. Tradition has created an un-biblical view of God. Religious people have tried to use _____ as the motivation to obey God. We should be motivated by _____.

When we believe God love's us we will _____ Him. When we love Him it will be easy to _____ Him.

John 14:15, *"If you love me, you will obey what I command."*

God's love is revealed by what He did at the cross. He loved us so much that He put all of the punishment that we deserved on Jesus. Because Jesus paid the penalty for sin, there is now peace between God and man.

Read Luke 2:8-10

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9) And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10) And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11) For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12) And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14) Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Luke 2:10, "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you _____ tidings of _____ joy, which shall be to _____ people."

Luke 2:14, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth _____, _____ _____ men."

Was the good will between men? _____. Was the peace between men? _____.

Who was the good will from? _____. Who was the peace from? _____.

What is significant about this? _____

Under the Old Covenant sin had not been paid for, righteousness was not satisfied and God was angry.

Psalms 7:11 "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day."

God made a new covenant in the blood of Jesus. How should we relate to the Old Covenant? _____

Read Galatians 3:13 & 2 Corinthians 1:20. NIV

Galatians 3:13, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.'"

2 Corinthians 1:20, "For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God." NIV

All the _____ are ours, none of the _____ are ours. Why?

Read Romans 5:8-11. NIV

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9) Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! 10) For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! 11) Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation."

I am _____ by the blood of Jesus and saved from _____ through Him. I was an _____ of God, but now I am _____ to God by the death of His Son.

Define: Justified _____, Reconciled _____.

Read Isaiah 53:4-10:NIV.

“Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. 5) But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6) We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7) He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. 8) By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. Yet who of his generation considered that he was cut off from the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the blow was due? 9) He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. 10) Yet it is the LORD’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.”

Isaiah 53:4-10 describes the _____ .

1 John 2:1-2, *“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for <the sins of> the whole world.”*

Define propitiation _____ .

In your own words, describe what this means for you? _____

1 John 4:10, *“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”*

The exchange has two parts:

1. God proved His loved at the cross by _____ all wrath, so we would never _____ wrath.

2. Jesus experienced rejection so we could be assured of _____.
Ephesians 1:6, *“To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us _____ in the _____.”*

Read Isaiah 54:6-17. NIV

“For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back. 8) In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you, says the LORD your Redeemer. 9) To me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again. 10) Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed, says the LORD, who has compassion on you. 11) O afflicted city, lashed by storms and not comforted, I will build you with stones of turquoise, your foundations with sapphires. 12) I will make your battlements of rubies, your gates of sparkling jewels, and all your walls of precious stones. 13) All your sons will be taught by the LORD, and great will be your children’s peace. 14) In righteousness you will be established: Tyranny will be far from you; you will have nothing to fear. Terror will be far removed; it will not come near you. 15) If anyone does attack you, it will not be my doing; whoever attacks you will surrender to you. 16) See, it is I who created the blacksmith who fans the coals into flame and forges a weapon fit for its work. And it is I who have created the destroyer to work havoc; 17) no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and this is their vindication from me, declares the LORD.”

In verse 9, what is it referring to when it says, “for this is as the waters of Noah unto me?” _____

54:9b, “now I have sworn not to be _____ with you, never to _____ you again.”

54:10, “my _____ _____ for you will not be shaken nor my _____ of _____ be removed,” says the LORD, who has compassion on you.”

This New Covenant that God established is called a Covenant of _____.

Why? _____.

54:17 says, we should _____ every tongue that _____.

An accusation brings judgement. God has freed us from judgement though Jesus. If He were to accuse and judge us, He would break His own covenant.

Proverbs 19:27, “Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.”

Any message that undermines the _____ of God will cause a believer to err.

Read Romans 10:13-17, KJV

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

One must believe the Gospel of _____ if the Word is to produce faith when it is read.

Read Ephesians 6:11, 15, KJV

“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 15) And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace . . .”

The word “preparation “ means a firm foundation that comes from a readiness of mind. (Thayer’s Greek Lexicon of the New Testament)

The Gospel of _____ is the foundation that causes every believer to stand firm in every situation.

The message of the cross is the message of how God made _____ between man and God.

1 John 4:18-19, TLB

“We need have no fear of someone who loves us perfectly; His perfect love for us eliminates all dread of what He might do to us. If we are afraid, it is for fear of what He might do to us, and shows that we are not fully convinced that He really loves us. So you see, our love for Him comes as a result of His loving us first.”

Believing that God _____ me with a _____ love, sets me free from fear of _____.